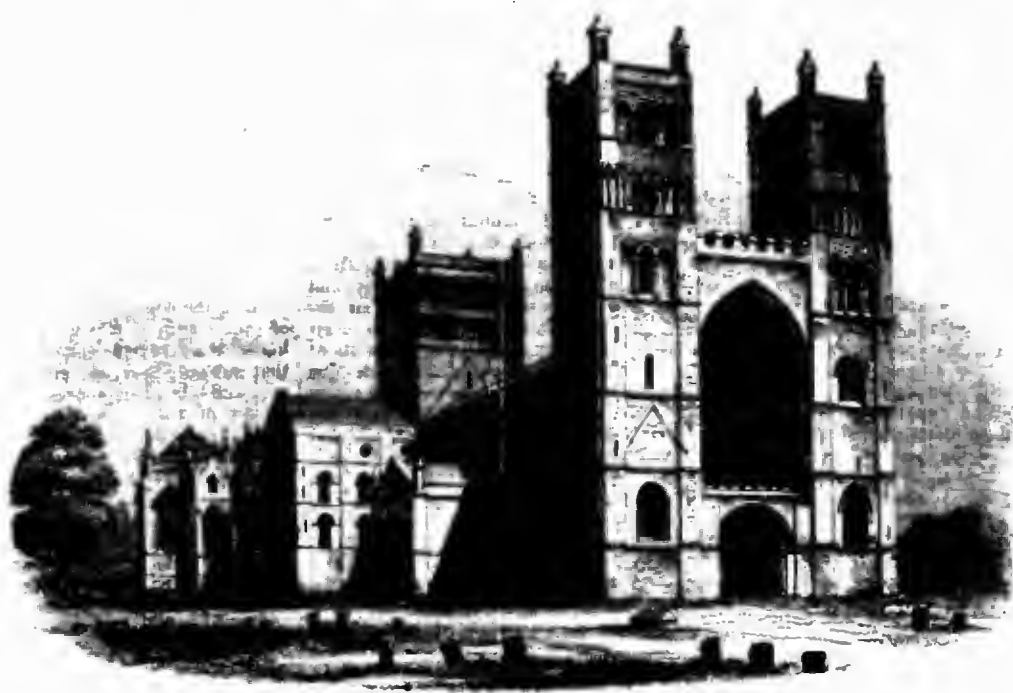


SOUTHWELL MINSTER.



centre, so that an artist, however deficient in attainment, can, by the aid of this simple instrument, produce the scroll or volute to any proportion. In any prescribed space a volute can be described in one revolution, and all the lines converge to the same point, or in the same space can make many revolutions with the same number of continuous spiral lines tending to the same centre." He afterwards sent us a number of volutes described by the instrument. These investigations have more extensive bearings than are apparent at first sight.

As we are speaking of books, we will take the opportunity to mention the scheme of *The Architectural Reading Library*, which has been opened by a respectable member of the profession, and will probably be found advantageous by some of our readers. The catalogue, now before us, includes 742 works, and this number it is proposed to increase. Each subscriber is to pay three guineas at the time of entering his name, as an entrance fee, and three guineas as his subscription for the year: for the second year the subscription alone is to be paid. Any two gentlemen under the age of twenty-one may club together to pay the subscription. Each subscriber is entitled to have out of the library at one time any number of volumes to the full amount of the annual or half-yearly subscription he has paid, for a period specified. But it is proposed, if the project meet with support, to appoint a committee of subscribers to advise as to these and other laws, and as to the best mode of increasing the efficiency of the arrangements. We sincerely hope that the scheme will find favour in the eyes of the public, as we see in it the germ of an important establishment.

"The number of books," writes a student-friend to us, "which it is necessary to master, the much greater number of which it is necessary to know something, oppress and overwhelm me." We have not space to offer him consolation and to urge him onward, but we have an apposite sentence of Schiller on the tip of our tongue, which he shall have instead,

and which will serve as a thought-giving close to our article:—

"Energy of spirit is requisite to overcome the obstructions which faint-heartedness, as well as the indolence of nature, opposes to education. Not without a significance did the Goddess of Wisdom, in the old fable, step in full armour from the head of Jupiter; since her first occupation is warlike. At her very birth she has to maintain a hard contest with the senses, who will not be torn from their sweet repose."

Fight the good fight, and fear not.

#### THE VALUE OF THE ROMANESQUE STYLE.

THROUGH circumstances, the new Byzantine Church at Wilton has lately met with considerable attention; and several opinions have been expressed as to the fitness of that style of architecture for modern English ecclesiastical structures.

At the risk of differing from many whose opinions are entitled, to the highest respect, I cannot help thinking that the Romanesque (and I include under that name all its protean varieties in England, France, Germany, Sicily, and Constantinople) has not met with a fair share of attention from modern architects. To those whose ideas of church architecture are limited to a reproduction of the forms of mediæval antiquity to the minutest detail, it is not to be wondered at that Romanesque should prove a dead letter; they soon get lost in a perfect maze of beak-heads, cat-heads, griffins, and other monstrosities, which they soon see would never do to copy: they have not the smallest notion of *improving* a style: unless a style will furnish them with door, window, and buttress ready made, it is in their opinion worthless.

The history of Romanesque architecture is in one respect quite unique; its resources were never, as in Greek, Roman, or Gothic architecture, fully developed. Its infancy may be seen in the ancient basilicas, its youth at Constantinople or Ravenna, but a prime it never had. It was nipped in the bud by the invention of the pointed arch. There are some writers (Mr. Paley, in particular) who assert that Gothic architecture was the natural development of Romanesque,—that it could not consistently have taken any other form; but I have often thought that if, in some one country, the pointed arch had never appeared, a style of architecture of a degree of perfection of which we can now hardly dream, would

have been the result. If a few men of genius were to devote themselves to a careful study of the Romanesque (not exactly in the spirit of Berlin and Munich, which amounts to little more than reproduction), it would go a great way towards attaining that great desideratum—a new style of church architecture in the spirit of the Protestant ritual.

It cannot fail to strike the attentive observer of the architecture of the metropolis, that there is a singular want of harmony between the ecclesiastical and domestic structures erected of late years. The tapering spire, the pointed arch, the gracefully-diminishing buttress,—features which combine so well with those picturesque conventional buildings and straggling gables which the mediæval architect knew so well how to group around them, but ill accord with Pimlico palaces and west-end squares. The horizontal and perpendicular line, when brought into violent juxtaposition, produce, perhaps, the most jarring and unpleasant contrasts of which architecture is capable. Now just imagine, Mr. Editor, a church in a Romanesque spirit erected in such a situation. The admirable manner in which the Lombard churches of Italy combine with the street architecture, is worthy of remark, and they nevertheless present a strictly ecclesiastical character.

Mr. Sharpe has noticed the great number of churches existing on the continent where the round arch is used in windows, &c., and the pointed arch in what he terms the arches of construction. The round of the Temple Church, and Kirkstall and Fountains Abbeys, are English instances of this arrangement, the effect of which is, to my mind, very pleasing. In a case such as I have supposed, where the pointed arch would be too vertical in its outline for the exterior, it ought still to be used, to give greater solemnity to the interior. It strikes me that this mode of treatment would have been a great improvement to the church at Wilton. Another reason which induces me to recommend the Romanesque for metropolitan churches is its great suitability for decorations in ornamental brickwork. Any one who will look attentively at the new church at Streatham will, I think, soon convince himself of this fact. I know that many will point to the brick mouldings and ornaments of the Tudor period, and ask, triumphantly, what can be more suitable than these? But, with all due deference to their opinion, I must affirm that these were imitations of the stone features of their predecessors,—and to imitate stone in moulded clay seems to me just as